

## **Amendments to the Claims**

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions and listings of claims in the application.

## **Listing of Claims**

1-3      canceled

4.      (amended herein)      An electric power steering apparatus comprising;
- an electric motor ~~for adding the assist~~ generating an assistant steering force to a steering system;
- ~~a controller which drives said electric motor;~~
- a worm shaft engaged with said electric motor so as to be rotated by the assistant steering force thereof;
- a worm gear disposed on said worm shaft, and engaged with said worm shaft so as to rotate therewith;
- a worm wheel engaged with said worm gear so as to be rotated thereby;
- a pinion shaft engaged with said worm wheel so as to rotate therewith;
- a rack shaft ~~which steers a~~ engaged with at least one steered wheel by displacing so as to displace said at least one steered wheel along the an axial direction thereof, said rack shaft being engaged with said pinion shaft so as to displace said at least one steered wheel as said pinion shaft rotates;
- ~~a pinion shaft which is engaged with said rack shaft through a rack and pinion mechanism;~~
- ~~a worm shaft which is rotated by the electric motor;~~
- ~~a worm wheel which is engaged with said worm shaft and is integrally arranged with the pinion;~~
- end part holding means which holds the one end part of the first and second supporting units supporting first and second ends of said worm shaft on allowing the rotation of the such that said worm shaft is rotatable, and

~~center supporting means which holds the center part~~ a distortion prevention unit  
engaged with said worm shaft at a middle in the a longitudinal direction of the worm  
shaft on allowing the rotation of the thereof, such that said worm shaft ; is rotatable  
one end part of said worm shaft is joined with the electric motor.

5. (amended herein) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 4,  
wherein said ~~center supporting means has urging means which gives the urging force~~  
~~towards the engaging part between the~~ distortion prevention unit comprises an  
engagement assistor, said engagement assistor pushing said worm shaft and the toward  
engagement with said worm wheel from the opposite direction with respect to the  
engaging part.

6. (amended herein) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 5,  
wherein said ~~center supporting means has~~ engagement assistor comprises a first roller  
and, a second roller ~~which are touched to the~~ adjacent said first roller, and a spring, said  
spring pushing said first and second rollers against said worm shaft, and press the wherein  
said first and second rollers are arranged such that said worm shaft toward the engaging  
part between the worm shaft and the worm wheel is disposed centrally to said first roller  
and said second roller.

7. (new) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 4, wherein  
said first and second supporting units support said first and second ends of said worm  
shaft without play.

8. (new) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 7, wherein  
said first supporting unit comprises at least one ball bearing.

9. (new) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 7, wherein  
said second supporting unit comprises at least one ball bearing.

10. (new) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 7, wherein said second supporting unit comprises a needle bearing.

11. (new) An electric power steering apparatus according to claim 4, wherein said second end of said worm shaft is joined with said electric motor.